

Ex Ovo Omnia

A newborn dubbed "The Monster of Ravenna" was starved to death by order of Pope Julius II in 1512



And what of the mother of the monster,
the Pandora's box of her womb? What crack

in the world did she peer through to impress
this upon her child: eagle's foot and horned

head, serpents dripping from its waist, bat wings
folded over a superfluous eye?

What can we say for the mother except

from the egg, all—newt and rodent, human

and worm? What could she know of genetics:
cistrons that pump out seven hearts, twin mouths,

or a form more common, more humble? What
could she do but watch while her infant starved?

What could she do but what we all do—hold
our faults close, their names like stones on our tongues?